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C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 000243

SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE, IPA AND SELVA. NSC FOR
SHAPIRO/PASCUAL.

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TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [KPAL](#) [IS](#)
SUBJECT: PALESTINIANS SEEK USG ASSISTANCE IN REOPENING
INSTITUTIONS IN EAST JERUSALEM

REF: A. 08 JERUSALEM 01432
[1](#)B. 08 JERUSALEM 00316

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. Palestinian contacts have asked the USG to encourage the GoI to allow eight Jerusalem-based Palestinian institutions to reopen this month. The institutions were originally closed in 2001, and the closures have been renewed every six months since then. End Summary.

PALESTINIANS SEEK HELP TO REOPEN JERUSALEM INSTITUTIONS

[1](#)2. (C) Orders to close eight Jerusalem-based Palestinian institutions will expire February 8, 2009. The GoI Ministry of Interior originally closed the eight institutions in 2001, saying they were operating on behalf of the PA in Jerusalem in violation of the Oslo accords. The GoI has renewed the closure every six months since then, most recently in August [1](#)2008. (Note: The eight institutions are listed in Ref B. The Roadmap calls on the GoI to reopen the "Palestinian Chamber of Commerce and other closed Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem." End note.)

INSTITUTION DIRECTORS DISCUSS EFFORTS TO REOPEN

[1](#)3. (C) General Manager of the Arab Studies Society Ishaq Budeiri told PolOff that he has seen no change in GoI policy toward Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem, and he does not expect the GoI to reopen the institutions without USG encouragement. He said the GoI never gave clear guidance on what the institutions need to do to reopen in Jerusalem. He said that the GoI suggested the Arab Studies Society relocate to the West Bank, which he refused to do.

[1](#)4. (C) Director of the Chamber of Commerce Azzam Abu Saoud asked the USG to press the GoI not to renew the closure orders. He told EconOff January 28 that the GoI asked in August 2008 for a letter from the Chamber requesting permission to reopen and pledging to operate independently of the PA. Abu Saoud submitted the letter in November 2008 but said he has not heard back from the GoI. (Note: A copy of this letter can be found at the Consulate General's classified website at <http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/jerusalem/ind ex.cfm> by clicking on the link for Political Reporting Attachments. End note.)

[1](#)5. (C) Note: The issue of East Jerusalem institutions was raised repeatedly by President Abbas in meetings with PM Olmert in 2008.
WALLES